

A Midnight in the Barrens

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Category: IT (2017), IT - Stephen King

Genre: M/M

Language: English

Characters: Eddie Kaspbrak, Richie Tozier

Relationships: Eddie Kaspbrak/Richie Tozier, Reddie - Relationship

Status: Completed

Published: 2017-09-26

Updated: 2017-09-26

Packaged: 2020-01-20 22:17:17

Rating: General Audiences

Warnings: Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings

Chapters: 1

Words: 2,161

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

Richie drags Eddie out during the middle of the night to take an unplanned trip to the Barrens. He was just doing it to hang out with his good friend that he liked very platonically and carried no romantic feelings for- right?

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Author's Note:

I MADE REDDIE FANFICTION, I'M OFFICIALLY REDDIE TRASH. Please don't attack me, they're like 15 in this and all they're doing is kissing, not making out or doing weird shit.

Tonight was a cold night, with a breeze that rustled the trees that surrounded the quaint little town of Derry. It was quiet, save for the occasional scrape of converse-bottoms against crumbling rock and a curse that was muttered under heavy breath.

Two boys scrambled across the gully that bled away from the sewer pipes, shoes coated with thick layers of mud and hair disheveled from the wind. The smallest of the pair was a dark haired teenager with light freckles splattered across his nose, a simple graphic shirt, pair of shorts that seemed to ride up just a bit too much to seem comfortable, and a worn black fanny pack clipped to his waist. He was making a look of utter disgust, his nose crinkled and his large brown eyes widened, hands tensed at his sides to swipe at anything that came within a foot radius of him. If anxiety had a human form-well, it would be him.

In contrast, the other boy (*a much taller boy*) adorned a dopey grin that fit well with his coke-bottle glasses and messy black locks of hair that flew openly with the breeze. He hopped from rock to rock, a Hawaiian shirt that he had previously been wearing was now tied around his hips to allow for better movement of his arms. The boy jumped to one of the stones that he figured was firmly in place, but it hadn't been, and he wobbled a bit and splashed his feet into the stream of muddy water, stumbling and catching himself before he wiped clean out.

“Oof! That was a close one there, Eds. Did ya see me? I was on some next level parkour shit,” the curly haired boy mused, turning to see the other’s reaction, only to be met with a look that can only be described as *“the look you see before you get brutally murdered”*.

Richie swallowed hard, his smile looking a bit more strained as he finally realized why he was being stared down so angrily. In the process of catching himself, he splashed the muddy water right onto the tinier boy, leaving his hair dripping wet and his once clean shirt smudged.

“Ah gee, Eds. I didn’t see ya there. This wouldn’t be a problem if you grew a bit so you were in my line of sight,” Richie explained in a jokingly condescending tone, waltzing over to the fuming boy and brushing his hair back for him.

Eddie swiped away the other’s hands, taking a step back as he then rested his fists at his sides. “Oh, *really?* Well, if you actually paid attention for once in your goddamn life, you would’ve watched where the fuck you were stepping!” Eddie snapped in response, causing Richie to flinch a bit. The smaller boy huffed once more, obviously still riled up and not even close to being done ranting. “Not to mention we wouldn’t even be here if *someone* didn’t waltz up to my house at midnight, declare he wanted to go to the Barrens, and then proceed to drag me around in shitty ass sewer water for hours on end like a pair of mental hospital escapees!” He finally finished, huffing and throwing his arms up in the air, which looked sort of awkward since one of his arms was restrained due to his cast.

“Guess you have experience about what it’s like to be in a nuthouse, don’t you Eddie Spaghetti?” Richie smirked, watching as the other’s anger was quickly reignited and he began raving and ranting once more. However, Richie’s eyes had drifted toward the other’s cast, and he could only seem to focus on *it* and nothing else.

Richie hadn't really paid close attention to it before. Ever since they were banned from hanging out, he had been consumed with worry that when he finally got to see Eddie again, he would be traumatized or broken or worst of all: conditioned to act just like his mom. So when they finally were able to see each other again, the broken arm wasn't even a concern. But now, looking at the cast, he saw that it was completely blank. Or so it seemed. As his eyes drifted over it and he saw a faded signature, getting his hopes up that maybe one of the Losers did actually sign it.

His heart sank a bit in his chest when he read the word "Loser" scribbled in black ink across where he figured maybe Stan or Billy's signature should've been. It was obvious that Eddie hadn't been the one to do it, since a big "V" was drawn in red over the S to change it to "Lover". It was extremely pitiful to even look at.

His heart felt heavy before, but that tipped him over the edge. Before he knew what he was doing, he was reaching out without hesitation towards the other's arm, ghosting his fingers across the letters.

"Richie, are you listening to me?!" Eddie squealed at the other, reeling back at the sudden touch. This caused Richie to stir out of his thoughts, blinking like he had been just waking up from a coma.

"S-Sorry, just thinking about how I banged your mom last night..." He trailed off, raking a hand through his unruly dark curls before shoving his hands in his pockets, turning around before the other had a chance to notice the damper in his mood.

He began strolling down the bank of the stream, occasionally colliding the toe of his shoe with a pebble and kicking it for a few strides before it tumbled into the flowing water. *Come on Richie, keep*

it together. Why are you even upset about Eddie's stupid cast? So what if it says Loser, we're the literal Losers Club- so what difference does it make if he gets called one? Why did it make him see red and want to break the jaw of whoever did that to Eddie? Why did it make him want to hold him and kiss his forehead and tell him it was going to be okay? That's kind of fucking gay, Richie.

“Richie!”

A shrill call yanked the other out of his thoughts that once again caused him to dissociate, startling him a bit as he nearly busted his ass for a second time. “Jeez Eds, never call my name like that unless you’re screaming it in bed!” Richie replied, turning on his heel to face the other.

Eddie’s face was bright red, as if his head had been upturned towards the sun all day, and his large brown doe eyes were widened, not doing any good job at concealing his easily expressed concern.

“Richie, you-” Eddie inhaled a bit, eyes darting about rapidly as he tried to search for the right words in his flustered state, “You only get like... this when you’re upset or hiding something,” The shorter boy mumbled, taking a few small steps forward with his eyes downcast. “It’s not like I fucking care but, if something’s wrong... you can tell me...”

Richie’s breath caught in his throat at the sight of the other, nervously fidgeting with his hands, trying to hold eye contact but having to glance away every so often in embarrassment. It was the cutest yet most painful thing Richie had ever experienced: on one hand, he had this adorable boy who couldn’t even meet his eyes without blushing, and on the other hand he had a heart-wrenching feeling that stirred up some emotions he didn’t know had laying around.

It wasn't a secret that Richie Tozier's parents were abusive. You didn't even have to be around him that long to know that he's got something wrong with him. Most people summed it up to him being naturally annoying, but Eddie knew the truth. He was so starved for attention and neglected at home, that the slightest expression of love and care made him crumble.

"Eddie, I..." Richie looked away, clenching and unclenching his fists as if wrestling with a thought. He gnawed on his lip, trying to meet his gaze anywhere except for Eddie's worried face.

"I think the condom broke inside your mom last night."

The snarky remark was met with a hard punch into Richie's arm, eliciting a snort and stumble from the taller boy. Eddie, on the other hand, was fuming and completely red in the face.

"You idiot! I actually express I care for once, I leave you open to talk about whatever you want to blab about, and you make a joke about having sex with my mom! *MY MOM, RICHIE!* You don't realize how much I care about you, you don't understand how many times I've looked at you and just wanted to hug you and tell you it's going to be okay, you don't-"

Eddie's words were stopped right as they were leaving his mouth, by Richie's lips firmly pressed against his own. Richie's eyes were screwed shut, but Eddie's were wide open in shock at the feeling of Richie fucking Tozier's lips against his own.

The kiss was sudden, and he couldn't tell if it was pleasant or not,

because he had never been kissed before. It made his heart rate speed up, his teeth clacked against Richie's, and he tasted like gummy worms for whatever reason. Eddie didn't know how to describe the sensation pooling inside his stomach, but whatever it was, he didn't necessarily want it to stop.

After what seemed like years, Richie finally pulled away with bated breath, averting his gaze downwards. "I don't think you understand either, Eddie." He murmured after a moment of tense silence, letting his hair flop over his eyes so he didn't have to look at the other.

He waited a moment, then two, then three, then four. The fifth second passed and finally Richie raised his head, just in time to see Eddie inhaling sharply, with the darkest shade of red he has ever seen on a human. If Richie hadn't been on the verge of a breakdown, he probably would've pointed and laughed.

Eddie was fumbling with his inhaler, his hands shaky and covered with sweat and river water so the aspirator kept slipping out of his grip. Finally he was able to shove it in his mouth and taking a deep breath, eyes closing with relief. He pulled it away, taking in strained breaths as he tried to steady his breathing once more. Once the medicine effectively opened up his airways, he unzipped his fanny pack, slipping the inhaler back inside, zipped it up, turned to Richie, and grabbed the front of his shirt in fists.

"What the *fuck* were you thinking, Tozier?!" He screamed at the other, having to go on his tippy toes just to get in the other's face. It would've been a bit more intimidating if it wasn't for the height difference and way his voice cracked when he got emotional.

Richie was scrambling to think of something, because for the first

time in all of history, the trashmouth couldn't think of a response. "I-I-" he was cut off by Eddie angrily shaking his head, yanking the other down to his height so he didn't have to stand so awkwardly.

"If you want to kiss me, Richie, then let me show you how it's done."

Richie opened his mouth to reply, but his voice was just not cooperating with his brain. But, turns out he didn't need to speak, because Eddie's lips were against his own in a matter of seconds. This time, it was Richie's turn to be surprised.

He stared a bit, taking a moment to admire the way Eddie's lashes ghosted over his freckled cheeks and how he kissed so gently and innocently. Richie let out a breath through his nose, finally relaxing enough to close his eyes too, and they just stood there holding each other and kissing in silence.

It was not a passionate kiss. It was not a sexually driven kiss. It was just loving, and pure, and innocent in the best way.

When they finally pulled away, they just stared at each other for a while, admiring each other's features. Eddie was the first to make a move, which was to swipe Richie's unkempt curls out of his face and behind his ear lovingly, almost in a motherly way. Richie snorted at this, planting a soft kiss on the other's nose.

"Don't be so motherly Eddie, you know I have a kink for your old lady-"

Richie was immediately thrown from Eddie's embrace, causing him to trip for what was the third time in one night. Eddie was storming off down the rocky patches of grass that led uphill back toward Derry, hunched over and making sputtering noises of anger.

All Richie could do was laugh and holler at him to wait up, all the while letting his heart flutter at the thought that *his* Eddie Kaspbrak had liked him back.

Author's Note:

Please comment any critiques or thoughts! <3